2024

SIXTY FOR ALL

A ROADMAP TO EQUITABLE POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT FOR ADULT MISSOURIANS

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ESG Education Strategy Group

MOCAN MISSOURI COLLEGE & CAREER ATTAINMENT NETWORK

Table of Contents

Table of Contents **2**
Introduction **4**
Attainment Trajectory and Gap Analysis **4**
Setting our Progress Goal **4**
Overview of Key Findings **5**
Findings 5
Indicator Analysis to Close The Gap **7**
Improving Postsecondary Access **10**
Tactic 1: Rebrand and Monitor Fast Track 10
Tactic 2: Reform Policies that Create Barriers to Granting State Financial Aid to Justice-Impacted Learners 11
Tactic 3: Leverage Fast Track to Increase Ability to Benefit Usage 13
Tactic 4: Designate All Community Colleges as SNAP E&T Providers 14
Tactic 5: Integrate Adult-Specific Information and Planning Resources in Journey to College 15
Tactic 6: Hire Adult-Focused Navigators To Provide Support To Adult Students 16
Tactic 7: Communicate the Postsecondary Goal and Equity Targets 18
Tactic 8: Convene Equity Population Summits 19
Tactic 9: Use Tech-Enabled Solutions to Identify and Re-Engage Some College, No Degree Populations 20
Improving Postsecondary Completion **22**
Tactic 10: Scale Single Stops at Every Campus 22
Tactic 11: Co-locate Child Care Centers on College Campuses 23
Tactic 12: Uplift and Support the Scaling of Institutions Experimenting with Flexible Schedules 24
Tactic 13: Fund a Competitive Grant around the Adoption and Implementation of Proactive Advising 25
Tactic 14: Convene a Community of Practice around Credit for Prior Learning 27
Tactic 15: Scale Co-requisite Courses Across Institutions 28
Tactic 16: Make Opting-out of Reverse Transfer the Default 29
Tactic 17: Deliver Comprehensive Institutional and Student Guidance for CORE 42 30
Tactic 18: Publish Transfer Data Disaggregated by Equity Population Demographics 32
Improving Workforce Alignment **34**
Tactic 19: Actively Recruit Priority Populations into Apprenticeships 34
Tactic 20: Expand Successful Regional Workforce Development Models to a Statewide Initiative 35
Tactic 21: Partner to Expand Integrated Education and Training (IET) Programs 37
Tactic 22: Equip MDHEWD's Workforce Development Staff with Professional Development on Postsecondary Education and Training 38

Tactic 23: Harness MDHEWD's Employer and Postsecondary Relationships to Establish Work-Based Learning Partnerships..... 39
Conclusion.....**40**
Appendix A: Stakeholder Engagement.....**41**
Appendix B: Data and Projections.....**43**
Appendix C: Other Tactics to Consider.....**46**

A Special Thank You

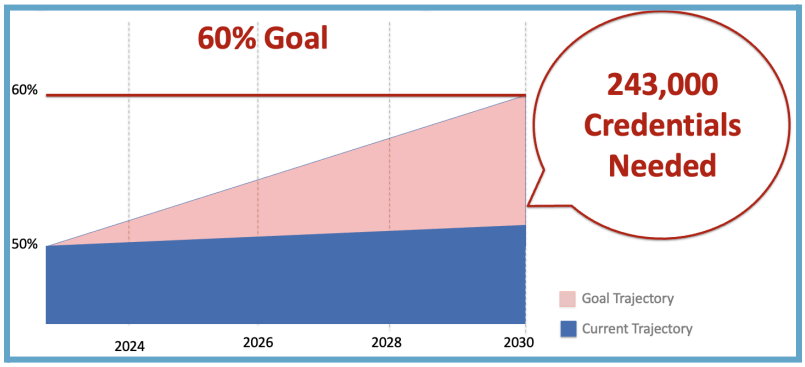
This report, *Sixty for All: A Roadmap to Equitable Postsecondary Attainment for Adult Missourians* is indebted to the support of both the Missouri Scholarship & Loan Foundation and the Lumina Foundation. Their crucial support has made this resource possible. We hope that it serves as a tool for state leaders, empowering them to further enhance adult postsecondary attainment efforts in the state.

Introduction

Missouri's economic prosperity is intricately linked to the attainment of postsecondary education. With 60% of jobs requiring education beyond high school, and 20% necessitating a bachelor's degree or higher, the connection between education and Missouri's economic health is undeniable. In a strategic move to bolster economic growth, Governor Parson unified the State's higher education and workforce development agencies in 2019, forming the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (MDHEWD). This merger signaled a commitment to a bold goal – ensuring 60% of Missourians aged 25 to 64 attain a postsecondary credential by 2030. Furthermore, MDHEWD is resolute in its pursuit of equity, recognizing historical disparities, and plans to close attainment gaps for Black, Hispanic, and rural adults. To navigate this mission, MDHEWD has enlisted the expertise of Education Strategy Group (ESG) to create a comprehensive report outlining what it will take to reach the state's goals for *adult learners*. ESG analyzed state and national datasets, conducted interviews with key stakeholders in Missouri, engaged the state's Adult Learner Network (ALN), and collaborated with a select steering committee (see Appendix A for a detailed list of stakeholders) to chart a course to 60% attainment.

Attainment Trajectory and Gap Analysis

Despite consistent progress toward the 60% postsecondary attainment goal, recent projections from MDHEWD indicate a looming shortfall. The data forecast a 6 percentage point deficit, translating to a substantial gap of 243,000 credentials by 2030. Further analysis estimates that approximately 100,000 of these credentials could be filled by interventions targeted at traditional-age students who will be counted as adults by 2030. This leaves a significant gap of 150,000 credentials to be earned by Missouri adults– those currently over the age of 25– without a postsecondary credential or degree. The urgency is compounded by the fact that Black, Hispanic, and rural adults face attainment rates of about 28%, illustrating a substantial gap to be filled in the coming years. To meet both the State's attainment goal and address equity disparities, Missouri must execute on a strategic set of initiatives between now and 2030.

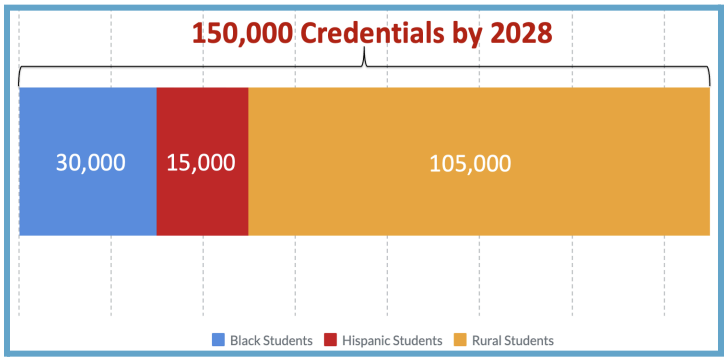


Setting our Progress Goal

To meet the State's 60% attainment goal and address equity disparities, it is recommended that Missouri set a progress attainment goal. That is, instead of a broad approach whereby the state will focus on closing the 150,000-person credential gap by 2030, the state should instead

channel efforts specifically toward Black, Hispanic, and rural populations and close that 150,000 person attainment gap by the year 2028.

This strategic recalibration not only accelerates progress, ensuring the state stays on course to achieve its overarching 2030 attainment goal, but, more significantly, it positions Missouri to close the attainment gaps within historically underserved equity populations by the year 2030. While reversing decades of historical inequity poses significant challenges, the targeted approach offers a pathway for meaningful closures in attainment gaps for Black, Hispanic, and rural adults. If Missouri successfully achieves this progress goal, not only will these populations experience significant strides toward equality, but the state will be poised to surpass its overall 60% goal, marking a resounding success in both attainment and equity by 2030.



Overview of Key Findings

Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative analyses, a set of critical findings emerged, shedding light on the challenges and opportunities Missouri faces on the path to 60%.

Findings

1. **To realize Missouri's adult postsecondary attainment goal and bridge equity gaps, it is imperative to expand enrollment among the targeted equity subpopulations.** Black, Hispanic, and rural adult students make up approximately .07% of total enrollments at public Missouri institutions. This figure, which equals about 11,000 students total, is less than 1% of the total population of Black, Hispanic, and rural adults without a postsecondary credential living in the state of Missouri. This suggests that there are substantially more prospective learners that could benefit from enrolling in postsecondary, but without a substantial increase in the enrollment of these equity populations, Missouri's attainment and equity goals are destined to fall short.

2. **The substantial 'some college, no degree' population in Missouri demands proactive attention and tailored interventions.** With over 600,000 individuals

falling into this category, Missouri's population is significantly larger than other states. For example, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, and Arkansas all have some college, no degree populations below 400,000 individuals. Missouri risks missing out on unlocking a significant pool of credential earners, hindering progress and growth in comparison to neighboring states. Strategic initiatives are required to unlock their potential and could result in quick gains for potential completers.

3. **The completion gap between adult learners and traditional-age students necessitates the creation of supportive educational environments that meet the basic, emotional, and academic needs of adult learners.** From 2017 to 2021, at 2-year institutions, traditional-age students achieved a completion rate of 33%, while only 26% of adults managed to complete. Likewise, in four-year institutions, 64% of traditional-age students complete their programs, while only 25% of adults reach completion. According to interviews with Missouri stakeholders, initiatives addressing the basic, emotional, and academic needs of adult learners are imperative to enhance retention, persistence, and graduation rates.

4. **To empower adult learners and foster their success, the development of flexible, accelerated programs designed to meet their unique needs is imperative.** Interviews with postsecondary stakeholders, the ALN, and the Steering Committee revealed significant interest in developing flexible schedules for adult learners, awarding credits for nontraditional learning through Credit for Prior Learning, and reforming remedial coursework. During various interviews, leaders of both universities and community colleges emphasized the shifting demographics within their institutions, noting a rising population of students aged 25 and older. They acknowledged the necessity for institutional adaptation to better serve these students. "We're 60% traditional and 40% accelerated, I want to flip that," said one interviewee.

5. **Missouri has a distinct opportunity to enhance credit mobility across institutions by leveraging existing strengths and implementing new strategies.** The focal point on 2-4-year transfers and reverse transfers is indispensable for aligning educational pathways, boosting degree attainment, and streamlining the higher education system. By concentrating efforts on these transfer mechanisms, Missouri can not only increase overall degree attainment, but also establish a more efficient and effective framework for higher education. Challenges described in interviews with college administrators around CORE 42, and the current momentum around reverse transfer, with initiatives like MDHEWD's Reverse Transfer Task Force and the ALN Completion Subcommittee, underscore the growing importance and potential impact of this approach in the state.

6. **The integration of the Higher Education and Workforce Development Department is a vital asset for the state.** Interviews with postsecondary stakeholders, the Adult Learner Network (ALN), and the Steering Committee highlighted the merger's significance in aligning education and workforce objectives in the state. This strategic consolidation allows both offices within MDHEWD to harness their unique expertise and established relationships, thereby forging a more interconnected and purposeful education-to-work pipeline. Missouri is positioned to capitalize on this merger's potential, seamlessly linking education and employment, and cultivating a workforce that integrates academic knowledge with the practical skills essential for thriving today.

Indicator Analysis to Close The Gap

In response to Missouri's imperative to achieve its postsecondary attainment goal and close the 150,000 credential gap by 2030, MDHEWD tasked ESG with assessing the magnitude of change needed across the education pipeline. The aim was to quantify the improvements required within Missouri's postsecondary education ecosystem to meet the critical workforce demands of the state.

To gauge the magnitude of change essential to bridge these gaps, ESG identified key indicators of postsecondary attainment through evidence-based analysis (see Appendix B for a full list of indicators). These indicators, informed by extensive stakeholder interviews and statewide reports, encompass various crucial aspects of Missouri's educational landscape:

- **Equity Population Enrollment:** Number of adults identified as Black, Hispanic, or rural enrolling in all undergraduate postsecondary education in Missouri.

- **Community College and University Success:** Number of adults identified as Black, Hispanic, or rural completing an associate degree or bachelor's degree at all Missouri institutions of higher education.

- **Non-Degree Credential Completion**: Annual completion of high-value certificates and certifications.

For each indicator, ESG identified targeted improvements that, when aggregated, would close the 150,000-credential gap by 2028. These targets were informed by rigorous impact studies and were set against a 2028 deadline, aligning with Missouri's new progress goal. Through focused efforts and a commitment to these targets, MDHEWD can guide the state toward a future where every Missourian has the opportunity to thrive in a dynamic and evolving workforce landscape.

Equity Population Enrollment	
Baseline	2028 Target
11,000	**24,000**

According to MDHEWD data, 11,000 Black, Hispanic, and rural people are currently enrolled in public postsecondary institutions. This represents only 1% of Missouri's total population of 25-64 years that identify as Black, Hispanic, or rural. Given the low numbers, even a small increase in an enrollment target will yield significant gains in credential attainment. If Missouri were to double down on enrollment efforts for Black, Hispanic, and rural students and enroll a target of 24,000 or around 2% for equity populations, the state would see an estimated 70,000 adult students earn a postsecondary credential by 2028.

Community College and University Success	
Baseline	2028 Target
3,000	**7,000**

Between 2017 and 2021, the completion rate for adults was 26% and 25% at community colleges and four-year institutions, respectively. Given those completion rates, a projected 3,000 Black, Hispanic, and rural adult students from the currently 11,000 enrolled are expected to complete. If the state raises total graduates from 3,000 to 7,000 Black, Hispanic, and rural adult graduates annually, a projected 20,000 students will earn a postsecondary credential by 2028.

Non-Degree Credential Completion	
Baseline	2028 Target
7,000	**20,000**

While the exact yearly baseline of non-degree credential completion is unknown or unreliable, a patchwork of datasets can be used to make rough estimates. Based on data collected from the National Reporting System, Apprenticeship USA data, and anecdotal information from regional workforce development programs, the number of Black, Hispanic, and rural students completing a non-degree credential each year is around 7,000. If the state increases its awarded non-degree credentials rate to 20,000 credentials, approximately 60,000 workers will have a postsecondary credential by 2028.

The table below summarizes the key performance indicators identified by ESG, crucial for gauging the magnitude of improvements needed within Missouri's postsecondary education ecosystem. Each indicator corresponds to its focus area and an estimated credential yield by 2028.

Summary of Key Performance Indicators		
Focus Area	Indicator	Estimated Credential Yield
Improving Postsecondary Access	Equity Population Enrollment	70,000
Improving Postsecondary Completion	Community College and University Success	20,000
Improving Workforce Alignment	Non-Degree Credential Completion	60,000
		Total: 150,000

The comprehensive analysis conducted by ESG, as reflected in the indicators and targets outlined in the summary table, unveils a roadmap for Missouri to bridge the 150,000-credential gap and attain its postsecondary education objectives by 2030. By doubling down on enrollment efforts for Black, Hispanic, and rural students, ensuring adults persist and complete their degrees, and increasing non-degree credentials for high-wage, in-demand jobs, Missouri can significantly amplify its postsecondary attainment. This forward-looking approach, anchored in data-driven insights and impactful targets, positions the MDHEWD to guide the state toward a future where educational and workforce alignment results in increased opportunities and success for all Missourians in the evolving professional landscape.

Improving Postsecondary Access

Unlocking the doors of postsecondary education for a diverse student population is a pivotal endeavor, with far-reaching implications for the future of Missouri's workforce and economic vitality. This section delves into tactics aimed at dramatically expanding enrollment among Black, Hispanic, and rural students. The energy devoted to improving postsecondary access is rooted in the recognition that there are simply too few Black, Hispanic, and rural adults currently enrolled to meet either the state's 60% attainment goal or the state's 60% equity goals. A barrier-free education system is foundational to societal progress. Focusing on unlocking financial aid opportunities, streamlining application processes, fostering a college-going culture for adults, and strategically identifying and re-engaging 'some college, no degree' individuals, Missouri can cultivate an environment where education becomes an attainable reality for all, transcending barriers and fostering a more equitable and prosperous future.

Tactic 1: Rebrand and Monitor Fast Track

Priority Level	Short-Term
Collaborators	Adult Learner Network, Institutions of Higher Education, Adult Students

Missouri's flagship adult scholarship, Fast Track, reflects the state's commitment to fostering accessible and affordable higher education opportunities for adult learners. By providing financial assistance to eligible individuals pursuing high-demand, short-term training programs, the Fast Track grant not only addresses the evolving needs of the workforce but also empowers Missourians to acquire valuable skills for in-demand careers. Despite this, Fast Track has faced low usage rates, with only 644 adults accessing the aid in the 2022-2023 academic year, significantly lagging behind comparable states with similar initiatives like Indiana's Work Ready grant or Tennessee Reconnect.

Findings from interviews indicate the program's transition from a loan to a grant, while designed to make higher education more accessible, may have inadvertently hampered its adoption due to a lack of awareness and understanding among potential recipients. Furthermore, administrative processes and communication challenges have compounded the issue, resulting in a stark disparity between Fast Track's potential impact and its current utilization rates in the state.

To address these issues, Missouri should pursue two key strategies. First, initiate a significant rebranding and simplification process for Fast Track. This comprehensive overhaul should encompass revamping marketing efforts, improving accessibility, and addressing

administrative hurdles to revitalize Fast Track and make it more appealing and accessible to the intended audience.

Secondly, if Fast Track does not demonstrate substantial improvements in the near term, it is prudent to explore the possibility of phasing it out and making way for a Reconnect-like program in which all community college programs are free for those over the age of 25. This proposed program can draw inspiration from successful models in Tennessee and Michigan, both of which have achieved higher participation rates and positive educational outcomes. Leveraging their experiences can provide valuable insights and strategies to enhance the effectiveness and accessibility of higher education opportunities for Missourians.

Steps to Rebrand and Monitor Fast Track:

- Conduct a comprehensive review of Fast Track's current branding and messaging to identify areas for improvement. This review should include input from potential recipients, program administrators, and marketing professionals to ensure that the program's messaging is clear, concise, and appealing to the target audience.
- Develop a new brand identity for Fast Track that is consistent with the program's goals and target audience. This new brand identity should be reflected in all marketing materials, including the program's website, social media presence, and outreach materials.
- Increase marketing efforts to raise awareness of Fast Track and its benefits. This could include developing a targeted marketing campaign, partnering with local organizations to reach potential recipients, and providing outreach to educational institutions.
- Simplify the application process for Fast Track to make it easier for potential recipients to apply. This could include reducing the number of required forms, streamlining the application process online, and providing assistance to potential applicants who may need help completing the application.
- If Fast Track does not demonstrate substantial improvements in the near term, begin planning for the transition to a Reconnect-type program. This planning should include research into successful Reconnect programs in other states, the development of a proposal for a Reconnect program in Missouri, and engagement with stakeholders to secure support for the program.

Tactic 2: Reform Policies that Create Barriers to Granting State Financial Aid to Justice-Impacted Learners

Priority Level	Short-Term
Collaborators	Department of Corrections, Institutions of Higher Education, Justice-Impacted Students

In a state that is home to approximately 26,000 incarcerated individuals, recent positive developments have occurred, notably the restoration of Pell Grants, which have opened doors for incarcerated students to access federal financial aid. However, despite this progressive step forward, Missouri still grapples with an array of statutory and policy barriers that prevent students within the criminal legal system from accessing vital state aid programs. These barriers encompass various policy buckets, including restrictions based on students' incarceration status and limitations that extend beyond their release from prison.

In seventeen states and the District of Columbia, there are no explicit statutory, regulatory, or policy barriers preventing incarcerated students from applying for state financial aid. These states include Alabama, Alaska, Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin. In these jurisdictions, incarcerated students are considered eligible to seek state financial aid, facilitating increased access to educational opportunities for this population.

Many state financial aid programs impose challenging eligibility requirements, creating obstacles for incarcerated students to qualify for funding. These requirements may include conditions such as full-time enrollment, minimum high school GPA, attendance at a public state university or community college, enrollment before a specified age, or within a certain timeframe after obtaining high school credentials. The educational backgrounds of many incarcerated individuals may disqualify them based on these criteria, and the timing or length of their incarceration could further limit eligibility.

State governments are increasingly recognizing the potential for workforce development by enhancing access to higher education funding and creating pathways to in-demand jobs that can yield substantial economic benefits for a state. The advantages include taxpayer savings, with every dollar invested in prison education resulting in $4 to $5 in reduced incarceration costs. Furthermore, participation in postsecondary programs during incarceration can elevate employment rates by up to 10% among formerly incarcerated individuals, contributing to increased economic stability. Additionally, studies indicate that engaging in postsecondary education while incarcerated can reduce the likelihood of recidivism by up to 48%, fostering safer communities. Prisons with educational programs also report lower levels of violence, enhancing safety for both residents and staff within these facilities.

To address these persistent challenges and foster a more equitable and inclusive educational landscape, it is crucial to remove these barriers and dismantle the obstacles that unnecessarily hinder individuals seeking to rebuild their lives through education and workforce development programs. MDHEWD should leverage its Reentry 2030 work and take steps to reform policies that create barriers to granting state financial aid to justice-impacted learners.

Steps to Reform Policies that Create Barriers to Granting State Financial Aid to Justice-Impacted Learners:

- Task the working group already reviewing Pell restoration's effects on state aid and draw on Missouri's Reentry 2030 work, to conduct a comprehensive review of barriers to state aid for incarcerated students.
- Develop a set of recommendations for policy changes that would eliminate or

mitigate statutory and policy barriers that prevent incarcerated students from accessing state aid programs. These recommendations should be based on the findings of the comprehensive review and data analysis.

- Develop and implement administrative policies that align with the recommendations for policy change.
- Provide training and support to staff at correctional facilities and higher education institutions on the new policies and procedures that are implemented as a result of the comprehensive review.
- Monitor the impact of the new policies on the educational attainment and workforce participation of incarcerated individuals in Missouri. This data can be used to identify areas where the policies are working well and to inform future revisions to the policies.

Tactic 3: Leverage Fast Track to Increase Ability to Benefit Usage

Priority Level	Medium-Term
Collaborators	Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Institutions of Higher Education

Ability to Benefit (AtB) is a federal provision that allows individuals without a high school diploma or equivalent to access federal financial aid for higher education programs by demonstrating their ability to benefit from such education through an approved assessment or completion of six college credit hours. In 2018, three Missouri institutions received AtB funding, but by 2021, this number had surged to 24 institutions. However, during interviews with both institutions and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) Adult Education office, it became evident that there was limited awareness of what AtB is and how it can be used to help adult learners. This suggests that the considerable increase in AtB usage– from 3 to 24 institutions–is concentrated at for-profit institutions, rather than public, Missouri institutions– a common occurrence across the country.

Missouri's Fast Track program presents a unique opportunity as it doesn't mandate a high school diploma, making it a potential catalyst to enroll adult basic education students into higher education by covering the first 6 credit hours for a student without a high school equivalency. By leveraging state Fast Track dollars, these adult basic education students could then unlock federal financial aid opportunities, further promoting accessibility and educational attainment among underserved populations in the state.

Missouri could draw inspiration from successful initiatives in states like Wisconsin. In Wisconsin, the technical college system took a proactive approach by developing an AtB user guide. This guide serves as a valuable resource, offering basic information about AtB, along

with practical tools such as a planning guide, advising checklist, and frequently asked questions (FAQ) section. By adopting a similar strategy, Missouri can empower educational institutions and students with clear, accessible information about AtB, fostering increased awareness and utilization of this crucial pathway to higher education. Such user-friendly resources can contribute significantly to demystifying the AtB process and enhancing its effectiveness within the state.

MDHEWD should establish a formal partnership with DESE's Adult Education office to streamline communication, advising, and recruitment efforts, creating a cohesive strategy to transition adult basic education students into higher education pathways. This collaboration will enhance outreach, support, and educational opportunities, ultimately facilitating the seamless transition of adult learners into higher education.

Steps to Leverage Fast Track to Increase Ability to Benefit Usage:

- Establish a formal partnership between MDHEWD and DESE's Adult Education office to enhance awareness of AtB, encourage its utilization by adult basic education students, and facilitate a smooth transition process for adult learners into higher education. Develop a comprehensive joint communication plan encompassing strategies like website development, brochure creation, and outreach initiatives to effectively promote AtB awareness among adult basic education students and institutions of higher education.
- Provide training and support to adult basic education instructors, staff, and admission and financial aid officers at institutions of higher education on AtB. This training should cover the basics of AtB, as well as how to advise students on how to meet the AtB requirements.
- Develop a process for identifying and advising adult basic education students who are eligible for AtB. This process should include screening students for eligibility and providing them with information about the assessment options.
- Create a system for tracking the progress of adult basic education students who use AtB to enroll in higher education. This data can be used to assess the effectiveness of the partnership and to identify areas for improvement.

Tactic 4: Designate All Community Colleges as SNAP E&T Providers

Priority Level	Medium-Term
Collaborators	Missouri Department of Social Services, Missouri Community College Association, SkillUP, Institutions of Higher Education

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) is a federal program designed to help SNAP recipients gain valuable skills and employment opportunities. It provides training, education, and job placement services to eligible individuals to enhance their employability and reduce their reliance on SNAP benefits. These federal dollars can be used to lower costs for institutions and students by providing financial support for tuition subsidies, reducing the need for institutions to rely on tuition revenue. Additionally, these funds can be directed toward creating cost-effective educational resources and support services, making education more affordable and accessible to students. Notably, approximately 1 in 8, or roughly 650,000 Missourians, receive SNAP benefits, with 22% of students identified as SNAP beneficiaries. These individuals often come from Black, Hispanic, and rural communities, making this program even more crucial for fostering inclusivity and economic mobility.

SNAP E&T is currently in use at 9 out of the 12 Missouri community colleges thanks to the valuable SkillUP program run by the Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS)and MCCA. Missouri should register all of its community colleges as SNAP E&T providers by expanding SKillUp to the last 3 community colleges. This type of scaling was achieved in Washington State through the Basic Food Employment & Training (BFET) program, a pioneering initiative leveraging SNAP E&T to address the education and training needs of low-income residents. Initially launched in 2005 with $150,000, the BFET program has experienced remarkable growth, expanding statewide and involving all 34 community colleges and over 30 community-based organizations.

This proactive approach will expand access to workforce development and education opportunities for SNAP recipients, helping them gain valuable skills and ultimately achieve self-sufficiency while reducing reliance on public assistance programs. MDHEWD should explore how it can play a role in facilitating the scaling of the SkillUP program to the remaining community colleges, ensuring that more Missourians, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, can benefit from SNAP E&T opportunities.

Steps to Designate All Community Colleges SNAP E&T Providers:

- Collaborate with DSS and MCCA to assess support requirements for scaling up the SkillUP program to the remaining 3 community colleges.
- Partner with community colleges to provide training and support to staff on SNAP E&T requirements and procedures. This training should cover topics such as eligibility determination, program enrollment, and job placement services.
- Conduct outreach to SNAP recipients to inform them about the availability of SNAP E&T services. This outreach should include targeted campaigns in communities with high concentrations of SNAP recipients.
- Monitor the implementation of SNAP E&T at all Missouri community colleges and make adjustments to the program as needed. This monitoring should include data collection on program participation, outcomes, and costs.

Tactic 5: Integrate Adult-Specific Information and Planning Resources in Journey to College

Priority Level	Medium-Term
Collaborators	Adult Learner Network, Adult Students, Missouri College & Career Attainment Network

According to interviews, the abundance of learning options offered in Missouri can be overwhelming, and educational terminology and processes can be difficult to decipher. Adult learners often struggle to balance life and work responsibilities with pursuing higher education. This combination of factors can make it daunting for them to determine the most suitable educational path, underscoring the need for tailored support and clear guidance.

Missouri's online postsecondary planning website, "Journey to College," has been instrumental in assisting traditional-age students with navigating the complexities of college. Journey to College serves as an important resource for students, offering a wealth of planning tools, financial information, and college success strategies. However, a more adult-oriented planning website is needed. College for Adults a World Education resource provides adult students with information about college planning and could serve as a potential exemplar to follow.

MDHEWD should explore integrating adult-specific information into "Journey to College." By enhancing this platform, it can provide adult learners with the necessary tools and resources to make informed decisions about their educational journey. This strategic integration will offer clarity and support to adult learners, helping them navigate the complexities of postsecondary education effectively.

Steps to Integrate Adult-Specific Information and Planning Resources in Journey to College:

- Create dedicated sections or modules on the "Journey to College" website specifically for adult learners. These sections should provide clear and concise information about adult education pathways, financial aid options, career counseling services, and support resources for balancing work and family responsibilities with education.
- Highlight success stories and testimonials from adult learners who have successfully navigated postsecondary education and achieved their career goals. These stories can serve as inspiration and motivation for potential adult learners.
- Integrate interactive tools and resources into the adult-specific sections of the website, such as career exploration questionnaires, financial aid calculators, and virtual counseling chatbots. These tools can provide personalized guidance and support to adult learners.
- Partner with adult education providers, community organizations, and employers to promote the "Journey to College" website to adult learners and provide ongoing

support in using its resources effectively. This may involve conducting outreach events, workshops, and online webinars.

Tactic 6: Hire Adult-Focused Navigators To Provide Support To Adult Students

Priority Level	Medium-Term
Collaborators	Adult Students, Missouri College & Career Attainment Network Adult Learner Network, TRIO Offices, Institutions of Higher Education

Adult navigators are dedicated professionals who play a crucial role in guiding and assisting adult learners in their educational and career journeys. These navigators act as mentors and advisors, providing personalized, holistic support and resources to help adults overcome barriers and achieve their academic and career goals. This type of support can result in significant attainment gains for adult students. In Mississippi, 26% of students who saw a "navigator," including those with just a high school diploma, earned a postsecondary credential compared to just 18% of their peers. In Tennessee, where adult navigators play an important role in helping adults navigate the Reconnect process, the state saw an increased enrollment rate for first-time adults when compared to other states by 26%-36% for the 2018-2019 academic year. In Michigan, 10 adult navigators service a portfolio of community colleges to help adults reconnect to postsecondary education.

DESE in partnership with rootED Alliance recognized the importance of advising traditional-age students through the launch of the Missouri Postsecondary Advising Initiative. This initiative is "designed to ensure all high school students, particularly those in rural communities, have an advisor exclusively focused on helping them achieve success following graduation."This initiative has demonstrated the value of having dedicated college and career advising in rural high schools and provides a model on which to build to provide guidance to adults in those communities.

In Mississippi, Tennessee, and Michigan, adult navigator funding is tied to legislatively established programs like Reconnect or MIBEST. In Missouri, considering the low enrollment of adult learners and the limited use of the Fast Track program, connecting adult navigators to Fast Track could prove exceptionally beneficial, but can be costly. Discussions within the ALN subcommittee on Access revealed interest in implementing adult navigators, focusing on philanthropic funding or accessing federal funding sources such as Title IV EOC funding or Perkins V, especially for workforce-related advising. This underscores the necessity for innovative thinking and adaptability to tailor funding strategies to the distinct needs and priorities of Missouri's adult education landscape.

Steps to Hire Adult-Focused Navigators To Provide Support To Adult Students:

- Pressure test the idea of adult navigators tied to Missouri's Fast Track program with the Governor and legislative champions in the state. Simultaneously, ask the ALN to assess alternative funding options, including philanthropic sources and federal programs like Title IV EOC and Perkins V.
- Partner with community colleges, universities, and other adult education providers to identify and recruit adult navigators. This partnership should also include providing training and support to adult navigators on the program's requirements and procedures.
- Monitor the implementation of the adult navigator program and make adjustments as needed. This monitoring should include data collection on program participation, outcomes, and costs.

Tactic 7: Communicate the Postsecondary Goal and Equity Targets

Priority Level	Short-Term
Collaborators	Governor's Office, Institutions of Higher Education, Adult Learner Network, Missouri College & Career Attainment Network, Community-Based Organizations

Fostering a college-going culture is of paramount importance in ensuring equitable access to higher education and driving socioeconomic progress. A college-going culture encourages individuals, regardless of their background or age, to aspire to and pursue postsecondary education. Crucially, inculcating this culture relies on effective communication of the state's postsecondary attainment goal and equity targets. It serves as a "north star," ensuring that all stakeholders, from students and families to educators and policymakers, are aligned to a common vision. Interviews revealed limited awareness of the state's attainment goal, which underscores the critical need for clear and widespread dissemination of this goal.

The Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) in Kentucky has initiated the Higher Education Matters campaign, a statewide effort involving public 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities. Aligned with the Commonwealth's commitment to achieve the 60x30 attainment goal, this campaign focuses on collaboration with changemakers and students to convey progress toward the goal. Key strategies include leveraging student voices through video clips and providing a media toolkit to education and workforce partners. The campaign is dedicated to communicating the affordability of postsecondary education, dispelling myths surrounding

college access and success, and fostering a supportive environment for students and their families.

Missouri should consider similar collaborative initiatives involving educational institutions, students, and changemakers. Leveraging student voices and developing multimedia toolkits can be powerful strategies for effectively communicating the importance of affordable postsecondary education, dispelling misconceptions, and garnering support from diverse stakeholders. This approach can serve as an inspiring model for building awareness and buy-in toward achieving educational attainment goals.

Steps to Communicate the Postsecondary Goal and Equity Targets:

- Develop a clear and concise communication plan to outline the state's postsecondary attainment goal and equity targets. The communication plan should identify the target audience, key messages, and channels of communication.
- Create a dedicated landing page to provide easily accessible information about the state's postsecondary attainment goals and equity targets. The website should include resources, success stories, and opportunities for engagement.
- Launch a social media campaign to promote the state's postsecondary attainment goals and equity targets. The campaign should use relevant hashtags and target the appropriate audience.
- Encourage students to share their personal stories about postsecondary education and how it has benefited them. These stories can be featured on the state's website, in social media posts, and in presentations to students and families.

Tactic 8: Convene Equity Population Summits

Priority Level	Short-Term
Collaborators	Adult Learner Network, Community-Based Organizations, Missouri College & Career Attainment Network

Engaging with local Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) is of paramount importance for state agencies, particularly when addressing the needs of minoritized populations such as Black, Hispanic, and rural students. These partnerships foster a deeper understanding of the unique challenges faced by these communities and provide a platform to co-create solutions that are culturally sensitive and responsive. By collaborating with CBOs, state agencies can tap into local expertise, build trust, and ensure that policies and initiatives are more inclusive and effective, ultimately advancing equity and accessibility in higher education.

In a notable example, Virginia's research into Native American students led to Virginia hosting a Native Nations Summit. This summit served as a critical gathering to garner support for

higher education initiatives specifically tailored to Native American populations. By convening stakeholders, including tribal leaders and representatives, Virginia demonstrated a commitment to acknowledging and addressing the educational disparities faced by Native communities. Such initiatives not only promote higher education access, but also foster cultural preservation and community empowerment among historically marginalized groups.

Missouri should adopt a similar approach, partnering with trusted organizations to engage with equity populations. While these community-based organizations may not currently have a primary focus on increasing postsecondary attainment for adult learners, it is vital for MDHEWD to initiate the process of cultivating these relationships. By doing so, MDHEWD can build a compelling case for collaboration and demonstrate the benefits of supporting postsecondary education for adult learners within these communities. This proactive outreach can pave the way for meaningful partnerships that advance educational access and success among historically underserved populations in the state.

Steps to Convene Equity Population Summits:

- Leverage MOCAN's equity Network to develop a list of CBOs with a focus on serving minoritized populations in Missouri. This list should include information on the CBO's mission, services, and target population.
- Reach out to CBOs to establish relationships and explore potential partnerships. Initial conversations should focus on understanding the CBO's work and identifying areas of mutual interest.
- Convene targeted equity summits for Black, Hispanic, and rural populations focused on addressing equity gaps in postsecondary education for underrepresented populations in Missouri. These summits should be regionally located and hosted in partnership with CBOs.

Tactic 9: Use Tech-Enabled Solutions to Identify and Re-Engage Some College, No Degree Populations

Priority Level	Short-Term
Collaborators	ReUp or CollegeAPP, Institutions of Higher Education

For the 2021-2022 academic year, Missouri's population of some college, but no degree, is estimated around 700,000 and potential completers—those individuals who have completed at least two years worth of full-time enrollment within the last ten years—is around 117,000 individuals. Among this group, many have already accumulated the required credits for a degree, highlighting a significant opportunity to recognize their educational achievements and boost the state's higher education attainment rates. While the precise number of Black, Hispanic, and rural adults is difficult to estimate, the overall size of this population remains one of the larger pools for increasing attainment rates.

Companies like CollegeAPP and ReUp offer solutions to better engage the some college, no degree population. Their technology platforms, outreach strategies, and personalized support services to identify and engage with students who have stopped their education. These efforts aim to re-enroll individuals, provide resources to help them overcome barriers to completion, and ultimately guide them toward earning a degree or credential.

In 2018, Texas State University introduced the "Bring Bobcats Back" program, aiming to support former students who had previously stopped out. Recognizing the intricate challenge of locating and re-engaging these students, Texas State strategically partnered with ReUp. This partnership not only successfully brought back students into the educational fold but also provided valuable insights into the complexities of student stop-outs, allowing Texas State to tailor its support accordingly.

MDHEWD should partner with organizations like CollegeAPP or ReUp to identify and re-engage SCND populations. This strategic partnership will streamline recruitment efforts for a difficult but critically important population.

Steps to Use Tech-Enabled Solutions to Identify and Re-Engage Some College No Degree Populations:

- Develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) that outlines MDHEWD's needs and expectations for the tech partner. The RFP should include specific criteria for identifying potential completers, streamlining the degree award process, and ensuring the accuracy of data.
- Select and engage a partner that best meets MDHEWD's requirements. The selection process should involve a thorough evaluation of proposals and engage stakeholders from the Adult Learner Network.
- Implement the partner's solution to identify and complete potential degree holders. This implementation should include training, data integration, and ongoing monitoring.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the tech partner's solution in identifying and completing potential degree holders. This evaluation should assess the accuracy of data, the efficiency of the process, and the impact on degree completion rates.
- Refine and improve the tech partner's solution based on the evaluation results. This improvement should involve continuous feedback and iterative adjustments to ensure the solution is optimized for MDHEWD's needs.

Improving Postsecondary Completion

Dedicated efforts to enhance postsecondary completion rates are a cornerstone in Missouri's journey to a more robust and equitable educational landscape. This section delves into tactics aimed at not just initiating educational journeys, but ensuring their successful culmination. The energy devoted to improving postsecondary completion is grounded in the belief that Missouri cannot enroll its way to 60% attainment. Missouri must increase its completion rates, particularly completion rates for adults if it expects to reach its attainment targets. The completion agenda is not merely about reaching the finish line, but about creating an environment where every learner, especially adult students, is supported comprehensively. Insights from postsecondary stakeholders shed light on challenges faced by adult students, emphasizing the significance of addressing basic needs, fostering supportive adult campuses, accelerating educational journeys, and streamlining transfers. By channeling resources and capacity into these areas, Missouri can not only increase completion rates, but also pave the way for a more inclusive, efficient, and responsive higher education system, poised to meet the diverse needs of its learners.

Tactic 10: Scale Single Stops at Every Campus

Priority Level	Long-Term
Collaborators	Missouri Department of Social Services, Institutions of Higher Education

In Missouri, nearly a quarter, or 22%, of students identify as beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. This statistic underscores the imperative to address non-academic barriers hindering students' educational pursuits and presents Missouri with an opportunity to explore strategic initiatives that enhance access to SNAP benefits.

A Single Stop is a comprehensive and integrated support service model designed to assist individuals, often students in educational institutions, with accessing a wide range of essential resources and services in one convenient location. These resources and services typically include academic advising, financial counseling, social services, healthcare assistance, and access to government benefits and community resources. The goal of a Single Stop is to simplify the process of seeking help and support by consolidating various services under one roof, making it easier for individuals to address their diverse needs and achieve their educational and personal goals. This holistic approach promotes student success and well-being by addressing both academic and non-academic barriers to achievement. Studies have shown increases in persistence of 8 percentage points and an increase of 3 percentage

points for academic achievement.

Virginia's legislature introduced legislation to mandate public higher education institutions provide students with access to accurate information about SNAP. This can include eligibility criteria, application processes, and the promotion of SNAP benefits prominently on institution websites and in orientation materials. In response, Virginia Community College System (VCCS) colleges have been implementing Single Stop statewide to provide students with access to social services and eligible benefits. The program's high success rate, with over 90% of students securing benefits, underscores its effectiveness in aiding a diverse group of students and aligns with VCCS's commitment to addressing equity issues. Since the colleges first adopted Single Stop, the tool has been used to screen more than 11,500 students and has connected them with almost $19 million in benefits.

Steps to Braid SNAP Funding to Launch Single Stops:

- Given a legislative approach to mandating Single Stops might be difficult, pilot the implementation of a program similar to Single Stop across a cohort of public higher education institutions in Missouri.
- Launch a statewide public awareness campaign to promote the newly implemented initiatives, emphasizing the importance of SNAP benefits and the availability of support programs like Single Stop.
- Monitor the implementation of Single Stops and make adjustments as needed. This monitoring should include data collection on program participation, outcomes, and costs.
- Share successes and best practices with other institutions to encourage the replication of Single Stops on their campuses.

Tactic 11: Co-locate Child Care Centers on College Campuses

Priority Level	Long-Term
Collaborators	Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Institutions of Higher Education

Access to affordable and reliable childcare is a critical factor in supporting adult learners' educational pursuits. Balancing family responsibilities with coursework can be a significant challenge for many adult students, and the availability of quality childcare services significantly impacts their ability to enroll in and complete degree programs. In Missouri, the availability of federal Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) funds, designed to assist low-income student-parents in accessing childcare services, is limited, with only three institutions receiving these resources. For comparison, Illinois has 11 sites and Oklahoma has 6 sites. In interviews with Missouri stakeholders, CCAMPIS was not seen as a useful policy lever

to expand child care in Missouri because of concerns related to its restricted reach and insufficient funding allocation, especially for capital projects.

Research by the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) suggests that co-locating Head Start programs on college campuses can serve as a multifaceted solution. Not only do these programs help meet the child care needs of student-parents, but they also provide workforce development and training opportunities for students interested in early childhood education, creating a mutually beneficial arrangement that supports both educational goals and family needs.

MDHEWD should partner with DESE to explore the establishment of Head Start child care programs located on college campuses. This collaborative effort will help address the significant childcare barriers faced by adult learners, enabling them to pursue their educational goals more effectively. Co-located Head Start programs can simultaneously serve as practical training opportunities for students interested in early childhood education, aligning workforce development with educational objectives. By proactively exploring and implementing this initiative, Missouri can better support its adult learners, improve educational access, and contribute to the state's workforce development and early childhood education sectors.

Steps to Co-locate Child Care Centers on College Campuses:

- Mandate the collection of a "family status" question on college application forms to improve the state's capacity to identify and target parenting students.
- Secure funding for a child care pilot program through a combination of state, federal, and private resources. Consider braiding funding from sources including CCAMPIS funds, Head Start expansion grants, and philanthropic donations.
- Monitor and evaluate the success of the pilot program and determine its potential for expansion to other college campuses in Missouri. The evaluation should consider the impact on student-parents' educational attainment, the quality of early childhood education services provided, and the overall cost-effectiveness of the program.

Tactic 12: Uplift and Support the Scaling of Institutions Experimenting with Flexible Schedules

Priority Level	Short-Term
Collaborators	Institutions of Higher Education, Adult Learner Network

Interviews highlighted the multifaceted challenges faced by adult learners, balancing diverse priorities in their daily lives. Recognizing this, the necessity for flexibility in course scheduling becomes apparent, encompassing options such as accelerated courses, online or hybrid formats, and non-traditional time slots like nights and weekends. This adaptable approach

aims to cater to the distinct needs and time constraints of adult learners, fostering a more responsive and accessible educational environment. Several college leaders interviewed acknowledged the changing enrollment demographics and the need to better serve adult learners. As such, several of the institutions were in the process of experimenting with flexible scheduling.

The College System of Tennessee conducted a study comparing success rates for some college, no degree students returning to traditional and accelerated courses. The findings indicate that, when assessing the success of adult students returning to education, overall success rates were slightly higher in accelerated courses. In the fall of 2020, 77% of enrollments in accelerated courses resulted in a passing grade, compared to 75% in traditional courses. This trend remained consistent across various student types and demographic groups. Notably, among adult students returning to education, success rates in accelerated courses were even higher at 80%, with a significant eight-percentage-point increase observed for academically underprepared individuals.

MDHEWD should proactively support institutions in addressing the distinct needs of rural and urban adult learners through targeted experimentation with flexible scheduling strategies. Establish a dedicated cohort for rural institutions, encouraging them to experiment with innovative approaches such as remote learning to overcome transportation barriers prevalent in rural areas. Simultaneously, create a separate cohort for urban institutions to explore the viability of weekend colleges, catering to the scheduling constraints faced by adults working Monday through Friday. By providing targeted support and resources to these cohorts, MDHEWD can foster the development of effective models tailored to the unique challenges of each setting.

Steps to Uplift Institutions Experimenting with Flexible Schedules:

- Identify and compile a list of rural and urban institutions in Missouri that are implementing innovative course scheduling strategies to accommodate adult learners.
- Support the implementation and scaling of these flexible scheduling programs, closely monitoring and evaluating their effectiveness.
- Develop and publish a case study report highlighting the successful implementation of flexible course scheduling at rural and urban institutions in Missouri.
- Organize a convening or workshop to bring together representatives from these institutions to share their experiences and best practices with other rural and urban institutions.

Tactic 13: Fund a Competitive Grant around the Adoption and Implementation of Proactive Advising

Priority Level	Medium-Term

Collaborators	Institutions of Higher Education, Adult Learner Network

Missouri has forged a strategic partnership with Complete College America (CCA), an organization renowned for its advocacy of corequisite remediation and proactive/intrusive advising in higher education. According to interviews, while some institutions have made strides in implementing proactive advising, there is a continued need for further scaling and enhancement. This scaling is crucial for adult learners as it ensures more tailored and effective support throughout their educational journeys, facilitating a smoother and more successful transition into higher education. Proactive advising not only addresses the unique challenges adult learners may face, but also maximizes their chances of completing their academic goals by providing personalized guidance and resources. The strategic partnership with Complete College America underscores Missouri's commitment to advancing these support mechanisms, aiming to create a more inclusive and supportive higher education environment for adult learners.

Proactive advising, as exemplified by Georgia State University's highly successful GPS Advising program, has proven its effectiveness in significantly improving retention rates, particularly for adult learners. This approach integrates technology, faculty support, data-driven interventions, and early engagement to create a compelling model for addressing the unique retention challenges faced by adult learners in higher education. In the most recent academic year, the system facilitated over 55,000 individual meetings between advisers and students, focusing on specific alerts to guide students back on the path to graduation. Since the initiation of GPS Advising in 2012, Georgia State has witnessed a five-percentage-point increase in freshman fall-to-spring retention rates, and graduating seniors are taking fewer excess courses in the pursuit of their degrees

We recommend that MDHEWD initiate a competitive grant program designed to incentivize institutions to adopt and implement proactive advising models inspired by the success of Georgia State's approach. This entails providing funding support for the development, implementation, and evaluation of proactive advising initiatives tailored to the unique needs of Missouri's student population. Institutions interested in participating would need to submit proposals outlining their proactive advising plans, including strategies for student engagement, technology integration, and outcome assessment.

Steps to Fund a Competitive Grant around the Adoption and Implementation of Proactive Advising:

- Develop a comprehensive grant program proposal outlining the goals, eligibility criteria, application process, and evaluation criteria for the program. The proposal should clearly define the objectives of the program, the types of institutions eligible to apply, the specific requirements for grant applications, and the metrics used to assess the effectiveness of grant recipients.

- Secure funding for the grant program through a combination of state, federal, and private resources. Potential funding sources include state appropriations, federal grants, and philanthropic donations.

- Establish a selection committee composed of experts in higher education, adult education, and advising to review grant applications and recommend awardees. The selection committee should consider the strength of the institution's proposal, its commitment to serving adult learners, and its capacity to effectively implement a proactive advising model.

- Compile statewide resources on effective proactive advising for adult learners. Collaborate with institutions and stakeholders to create a centralized reference, facilitating the adoption of successful strategies and practices across the state.

- Provide training and support to grant recipients to ensure the successful implementation of their proactive advising models. This support could include workshops, webinars, and ongoing technical assistance from CCA or other experienced providers.

Tactic 14: Convene a Community of Practice around Credit for Prior Learning

Priority Level	Short-Term
Collaborators	Institutions of Higher Education, Adult Learner Network, Employer Community, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Credit for prior learning (CPL) refers to the practice of awarding college credit to individuals for knowledge and skills they have acquired outside of traditional classroom settings. This recognition is especially valuable to adult learners who bring substantial life and work experiences to their educational journey. Paradoxically, a 2021 CAEL/WICHE report found: "Black and lower-income adult students received strong boosts to credential completion from PLA/CPL credit—but they were the least likely to receive such credit." In interviews with Steering Committee members and during in-person engagements with the ALN, the importance of CPL emerged as a high priority for the state.

States like Washington, Ohio, and Colorado have brought together state and institutional leaders, employers, and other relevant stakeholders to collaboratively address issues related to credit for prior learning, specifically prior learning assessment (PLA). For example, in 2012, the Washington State Legislature charged the Washington Student Achievement Council with forming a workgroup to advance statewide policy on PLA. As a result, Washington's public and independent four-year institutions, along with community and technical colleges, granted a total of 36,425 CPL credits applicable to certificates or degrees, and approximately 1,891 students successfully earned credits for prior learning.

The primary goal should be to establish clear objectives and procedures for awarding credit through PLA, with a focus on increasing the number of students who benefit from high-quality prior learning experiences. These convenings can serve as a platform for building consensus,

setting achievable goals, and promoting equitable access to PLA for underrepresented adult learners. Additionally, leveraging resources from organizations like the American Council on Education, including the National Guide, can provide valuable insights and best practices for implementing CPL policies and expanding opportunities for adult learners to receive credit for their prior learning experiences. This initiative will not only benefit adult learners but also contribute to Missouri's higher education goals and overall educational attainment.

Missouri should establish a state-wide community of practice to bring together state and institutional leaders, employers, and other relevant stakeholders to collaboratively address issues of CPL around a focused topic. Given the State's robust work around apprenticeships, CPL related to apprenticeships could serve as a potential launching point.

Steps to Convene a Community of Practice around Credit for Prior Learning for Apprenticeships:

- Establish clear goals and objectives for the community of practice. These goals should focus on increasing the utilization of CPL, ensuring equitable access for adult learners, and improving the quality of PLA processes.
- Develop a structured format for community of practice meetings and activities. This could include regular meetings, webinars, workshops, and online forums to facilitate discussions, share best practices, and address common challenges.
- Identify specific topics of focus for the CoP. These topics could include policies and procedures for CPL, assessment tools and methods, articulation agreements between institutions, and strategies for outreach and promotion. Leverage resources from organizations like the American Council on Education (ACE) to inform the CoP's work. ACE provides valuable guidance on CPL policies, best practices, and assessment tools.

Tactic 15: Scale Co-requisite Courses Across Institutions

Priority Level	Medium-Term
Collaborators	Institutions of Higher Education, Adult Learner Network

Traditional remedial prerequisite models in higher education often require students to complete developmental education courses before they can enroll in credit-bearing gateway courses. However, these models have been widely criticized for their inefficiency and ineffectiveness. Instead of facilitating progress, they often create barriers for students, prolonging the time it takes to complete degrees and increasing the likelihood of dropout. To address these shortcomings, corequisite remediation models have gained traction. In corequisite models, students are placed directly into entry-level, credit-bearing gateway courses along with a concurrent support course tailored to their needs.

In Tennessee, gateway course completion rates have doubled since corequisite reforms

launched, where students are placed into corequisite support courses for English, reading, and/or math. These reforms have introduced innovative learning models on college campuses to help more learners successfully complete gateway courses. These efforts, combined with academic support, are necessary to ensure equity gaps are minimized. Tennessee's corequisite reforms involved a shift in learning support strategies, such as evaluating the Corequisite Placement Pilot and considering new placement metrics, including high school GPA. The state also emphasized the importance of preparing advisors to engage students in meaningful conversations about learning support placement.

While good work has been done in Missouri to establish corequisite models, more can be done to scale this statewide. This shift can significantly improve students' progress and success, reduce time-to-degree, and enhance equity in educational outcomes. To support this change, Missouri can tap into valuable resources provided by organizations like Strong Start to Finish and Complete College America's Spanning the Divide site, which offers insights, best practices, and guidance on various aspects of corequisite remediation.

Steps to Replace Remedial Courses with Gateway Courses:

- Use the work on math pathways as a model and incorporate lessons learned from its implementation to guide the development and implementation of gateway courses in other subject areas.
- Engage with faculty, staff, and students at higher education institutions across the state to gather feedback and input on the proposed transition to corequisite models. This engagement should include discussions about the potential benefits and challenges of corequisite models, as well as the specific needs of different student populations.
- Provide funding and support to institutions for the implementation of corequisite models. This funding could be used to support faculty training, curriculum development, and the hiring of additional academic advisors and tutors.

Tactic 16: Make Opting-out of Reverse Transfer the Default

Priority Level	Short-Term
Collaborators	Adult Learner Network, Committee on Transfer and Articulation, Institutions of Higher Education

Reverse transfer is the process allowing students transferring from a two-year community college to a four-year institution to retroactively earn an associate's degree. This recognition is typically based on the credits students earned at both institutions, providing a valuable credential and flexibility for those who may have paused their bachelor's degree pursuit.

The opt-out approach in reverse transfer operates on the assumption of permission unless explicitly denied by the student—"implied consent." This method streamlines the process,

automatically conferring an associate's degree unless students express their decision otherwise. The effectiveness of the opt-out strategy lies in its simplicity and has been observed in various institutions, contributing to increased Associate degree awards and providing a more seamless experience for students.

The importance of reverse transfer to Missouri is underscored by the involvement of the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development's Committee on Transfer and Articulation (COTA). Collaborating with the ALN Completion subcommittee, they are actively working to address whether Missouri can transition to an opt-out approach for reverse transfer. This initiative aims to enhance the flexibility and outcomes for students in the state.

Considering the diverse landscape of Missouri's educational institutions without a standardized Student Information System (SIS), replicating the success of the opt-out approach, as seen with STAR at the University of Hawaii (UH), poses challenges. STAR's outcomes include automatically conferring an associate's degree, resulting in 700 degrees awarded annually and a remarkable 25% increase in Associate degree awards at UH.

However, a comparable case in Florida, dealing with similar SIS diversity, involves the use of FASTER, a cloud-based integration. Although Florida employs an opt-in reverse transfer system, different from UH's opt-out method, it presents a potential model for Missouri.

Missouri should explore a technology solution like FASTER, tailored to accommodate the diverse SIS landscape in the state. By combining this technology with the successful opt-out approach used by Hawaii, Missouri has the potential to streamline the reverse credit transfer process, offering students flexibility and potentially increasing successful reverse transfers.

Steps to Make Opting-out of Reverse Transfer the Default:

- Leverage COTA to engage in direct consultations with representatives from Hawaii and Florida. Gather insights on the practical implementation, benefits, and challenges of the cloud-based integrations (STAR and FASTER).
- Facilitate roundtable discussions involving key stakeholders, including educational institutions, the existing task force, and other relevant committees. Discuss lessons learned from Hawaii and Florida, and collaboratively brainstorm on how a similar technology solution could be adapted to Missouri's specific needs.
- Task the existing task force with developing a comprehensive implementation plan for adopting a cloud-based integration in Missouri. This plan should include a clear timeline, resource requirements, and a funding strategy.

Tactic 17: Deliver Comprehensive Institutional and Student Guidance for CORE 42

Priority Level	Medium-Term

Collaborators	Institutions of Higher Education, Adult Students

Missouri's core transfer curriculum, known as CORE 42, is a framework for general education that all Missouri public two- and four-year institutions of higher education adopted effective for the 2018-2019 academic year. Interviews with educational leaders highlighted that, while CORE 42 holds promise in theory, its practical application has been less effective. Over time, courses have been added to CORE 42 that are not always recognized by all 4-year institutions in the state. As a result, transfers are not as seamless as they could be, and even previously articulated transfer agreements, such as those for 2-year to 4-year teacher pathways, are reported to no longer function optimally. According to some interviewees, this challenge compounds teacher shortage gaps across the state, emphasizing the urgency of addressing transfer issues.

A study of CORE 42 is already underway to understand these challenges, reflecting Missouri's commitment to evaluating and improving its higher education transfer policies. This evaluation is essential as it will help uncover the root cause issues with 2-year and 4-year transfer in the state.

While awaiting findings on CORE 42, the state should implement clear guidance for students and institutions. The Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education have introduced the Oklahoma Course Transfer Module, a centralized platform offering information on course equivalencies across the state's institutions. This module provides accessible data through tables and a searchable database, encompassing transferable courses among public colleges, universities, and some private institutions in Oklahoma. Within the database, students can access tables and modules that systematically organize equivalent courses by academic discipline, empowering them to plan their degree pathways more effectively with a comprehensive understanding of course transfers.

The Texas Transfer Framework, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, provides clear guidance for institutions in Texas to improve the transfer process, especially for community college students moving to four-year universities. The framework includes 60 semester credit hours, specifying Discipline-Specific Texas Core Curriculum courses, Discipline Foundation Courses, and Directed Electives. Governed by the Texas Transfer Advisory Committee, the framework aims to ensure transparent, student-centric, and consistent transfer policies.

Missouri should create tailored guidance around the CORE 42 framework to institutions and students to ensure that transfers align effectively. Additionally, it is vital to establish a robust monitoring system to track the effectiveness of CORE 42 implementation.

Steps to Provide Institutional and Student Guidance on CORE 42:

- Review and analyze the findings of the CORE 42 study to identify specific areas where the transfer can be improved. This analysis should focus on areas such as course equivalencies, credit articulation procedures, communication protocols, and student support services.

- Develop comprehensive guidance documents and resources for both institutions and students to explain CORE 42 transfer curriculum, clarify its requirements, and provide clear instructions on how to navigate the transfer process effectively. These documents should be readily accessible online and in hard copy format.

- Organize workshops, training sessions, and webinars for faculty, staff, and counselors at two- and four-year institutions to provide in-depth training on the interpretation and implementation of CORE 42. These training sessions should cover topics such as course equivalencies, credit evaluation procedures, and communication protocols for advising transfer students.

- Establish a dedicated website or online platform specifically dedicated to CORE 42 to serve as a centralized repository for all relevant information, including the CORE 42 framework documents, course equivalency guides, transfer agreement information, and frequently asked questions (FAQs). This website should be regularly updated with the latest information and maintained as a valuable resource for institutions and students.

- Establish a robust data collection and monitoring system to track the implementation and effectiveness of CORE 42. This system should collect data on transfer rates, course equivalencies, student satisfaction, and employment outcomes for transfer students. The data should be analyzed regularly to identify areas for improvement and inform ongoing efforts to refine the CORE 42 framework.

- Conduct regular surveys of students and institutions to assess their satisfaction with the CORE 42 framework and identify areas for improvement. This feedback should be used to inform ongoing efforts to refine and strengthen the CORE 42 implementation process.

Tactic 18: Publish Transfer Data Disaggregated by Equity Population Demographics

Priority Level	Medium-Term
Collaborators	Institutions of Higher Education

Accurate and timely transfer data is an essential cornerstone for making informed decisions in higher education, particularly in the pursuit of equity and opportunity for subpopulations. Transfer data is vital for understanding not only the overall transfer trends, but also the specific pathways and challenges faced by diverse student groups, such as racial, age, and geographic subpopulations.

While MDHEWD collects good transfer data, the data that are publicly available are from 2014 and are not disaggregated by the state's priority equity populations. Stakeholder interviews, including community college leaders, consistently voiced the need for more comprehensive and up-to-date transfer data to inform their decision-making processes effectively.

The National Student Clearinghouse comprehensive report on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student transfers in higher education during the 2020-2021 academic year stands as an exemplar for Missouri. The report discusses the overall trend in transfer students, explores patterns in upward transfers, and analyzes disparities in transfer mobility across different demographics and institutional types. It aims to provide insights into how enrollment and transfer patterns may persist or diverge in the upcoming academic year.

Missouri should provide timely public dissemination of transfer data that is disaggregated by equity population demographics using the National Student Clearinghouse as an exemplar. This proactive approach will provide educational institutions, policymakers, and community college leaders with the necessary insights to better understand transfer dynamics among various student groups.

Steps to Publish Transfer Data Disaggregated by Age and Race:

- Publicly release disaggregated transfer data on a regular basis, such as annually or biannually. These data should be made available in user-friendly formats, such as dashboards, reports, and interactive data visualizations.
- Develop and disseminate data briefs and reports that highlight key trends and findings from the disaggregated transfer data. These briefs and reports should be tailored to the needs of different stakeholders, such as policymakers, institutional leaders, and community advocates.
- Provide training and support to educational institutions and community organizations on how to access, interpret, and use transfer data to inform their decision-making processes. This training should cover topics such as data literacy, data analysis techniques, and the application of data to improve transfer outcomes.

Improving Workforce Alignment

The Improving Workforce Alignment section delves into pivotal tactics aimed at fostering a seamless connection between academic learning and industry demands. The focus on workforce alignment is grounded in the belief that strategically aligning workforce and education goals will not only have an impact on individual career trajectories, but also macroeconomic prosperity in Missouri. The unique strengths of Missouri, including ranking among the top states for apprenticeships, lay a solid foundation for further expansion. The merging of Missouri's Higher Education and Workforce Development agencies adds a layer of synergy to this endeavor, creating a collaborative landscape where education and industry can leverage their expertise and relationships to build a strong economy. By building on these successes, particularly for underserved populations, Missouri is poised to enrich adult educational experiences, empower individuals with practical skills, and fortify partnerships between educational institutions and employers.

Tactic 19: Actively Recruit Priority Populations into Apprenticeships

Priority Level	Medium-Term
Collaborators	Employer Community, Institutions of Higher Education, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Missouri has been making significant progress in developing robust apprenticeship programs. For example, Missouri set a goal to serve 20,000 new apprenticeships by 2025, which was easily surpassed in the summer of 2022. This has made Missouri a national leader. The most recent data from the Department of Labor indicate that Missouri is fourth in the nation for new apprentices and third in the nation for apprenticeship completers. Despite these achievements, apprenticeships in Missouri, like many states, are underrepresented by Black and rural priority populations.

While the majority of states are actively recruiting underrepresented populations like women, youth, and veterans into apprenticeships, fewer states are focused explicitly on race. Montana and Minnesota are the exceptions to that rule. For example, the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry took proactive steps to enhance diversity and inclusion in apprenticeships. From the program's inception, the state focused on promoting greater diversity, especially among people of color and women. They integrated Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training for field representatives and established pipelines for underrepresented groups. A key strategy involved positioning state staff as "meaningful connectors" to bridge sponsors and community-based organizations, fostering diversity recruitment goals.

To achieve this, Minnesota implemented targeted approaches. They conducted employer surveys to understand outreach efforts, matched sponsors with organizations serving diverse communities, and presented demographic data during employer presentations to support case-making. The state also embraced pre-apprenticeship programs operated by existing sponsors, aiming to create supportive pathways for people of color and women and build robust recruitment pipelines. Through these strategic initiatives, Minnesota showcased a comprehensive commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion within apprenticeships, setting a notable example in the field.

Montana utilized cap breaker funding to enhance targeted outreach efforts for apprenticeship programs, with a focus on promoting racial and ethnic diversity. Specifically, the state directed funds towards tribal colleges, enabling them to establish their own Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs. The funding supported initiatives such as hiring an Apprenticeship Equity Director, implementing local demonstration projects, and providing training subsidies to employers. Montana collaborated with seven Indian Nations, five of which established pre-apprenticeship and RA programs, demonstrating a commitment to inclusivity and expanding opportunities within these communities.

A similar model should be deployed in Missouri by providing technical assistance to workforce boards and local communities.

Steps to Actively Recruit Priority Populations into Apprenticeships:

- Set specific and measurable targets to increase diversity in apprenticeships, focusing on Black, Hispanic, and rural adults.
- Designate state staff as "meaningful connectors" to facilitate collaborations between sponsors and community-based organizations, supporting diversity. Match sponsors with local organizations serving diverse communities. Forge partnerships with trade organizations, schools, and workforce development boards for effective outreach.
- Incorporate demographic data into employer presentations, emphasizing the economic benefits of hiring diverse apprentices.
- Expand pre-apprenticeship pathways for Black, Hispanic, and rural adults operated by existing sponsors to improve the recruitment pipelines.

Tactic 20: Expand Successful Regional Workforce Development Models to a Statewide Initiative

Priority Level	Medium-Term
Collaborators	Institutions of Higher Education, Employer Community, Regional Workforce Intermediaries

Like many states, Missouri has seen pockets of success with promoting workforce development and attainment at the regional level. For example, Great Jobs KC, which provides access to tuition-free job training programs in high-demand career fields, has been transformative in the Kansas City area. It has garnered significant attention and interest among adults seeking to upskill or reskill for better career opportunities. While specific data on its success is forthcoming, qualitative interviews revealed that the program strongly resonates with adult learners making it a valuable resource for individuals seeking to enhance their employability and income prospects.

Peer states have successfully scaled similar workforce development initiatives in which the state provides financial support for training in high-demand fields. Virginia's FastForward program stands out as a pioneer for its "pay-for-success" model, which shares the cost of the training between the state, the institution, and the learners. This pay-for-success model pays back learners once they complete their training and pays back institutions once learners pass their credentialing exams, incentivizing both to prioritize attainment. The result is the state benefits from an over 90% credential completion rate in high-demand fields.

By focusing on incentivizing both enrollment and completion in high-demand fields, the FastForward program is a forward-thinking approach to workforce development. The program not only benefits individuals through increased earning potential, but also supports businesses by supplying skilled workers. With a remarkable track record of over 11,000 credentials earned, FastForward serves as a beacon for states seeking innovative, cost-effective models to enhance workforce skills, improve economic outcomes, and foster sustainable growth.

MDHEWD should explore opportunities to take its own workforce development initiatives, such as Great Jobs KC, and scale them statewide. Lessons can be taken from states like Virginia to ensure the state's investment sees a return for both Missourians and Missouri employers.

Steps to Expand Successful Regional Workforce Initiatives to a Statewide Initiative:

Evaluate existing regional workforce development models within Missouri. Identify successful programs that have demonstrated scalability potential and align with the state's economic goals and credentials of value list. This evaluation will provide insights into effective strategies and potential challenges that can inform the development of a statewide initiative.

- Evaluate funding mechanisms and explore innovative financing options for workforce development programs. Consider a pay-for-success model similar to Virginia's FastForward program, encouraging financial contributions from students, employers, and the state. Assess the feasibility of leveraging existing funding sources and potential partnerships with private entities.

- Develop a comprehensive outreach and marketing strategy to promote awareness of the workforce development initiative. Emphasize the benefits of short-term

credentials and the potential for career advancement. Establish support services, including advising and coaching, to guide adult learners through the process and facilitate successful program completion.

Tactic 21: Partner to Expand Integrated Education and Training (IET) Programs

Priority Level	Long-Term
Collaborators	Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Employer Community, Institutions of Higher Education, Adult Learners

Integrated Education and Training (IET) is a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. States like Washington, Indiana, Texas, Louisiana, and Florida have placed big bets on strengthening alignment between adult education, postsecondary education, and workforce through the use of IET programs.

The success of the I-Best program in Washington serves as a compelling testament to the impact of IET initiatives. By engaging in IETs, students in Washington received 13 more college credits compared to their counterparts in traditional programs, indicating the program's effectiveness in accelerating academic advancement. Additionally, the 32-percentage point increase in credential completion highlights IET's ability to support learners to successful outcomes, equipping them with in-demand skills that resonate with employers' needs. Washington's NRS data reveals that 3,897 adult education learners earned a postsecondary credential for the 2021-2022 school year.

In Missouri, NRS data from 2021 indicate that of the 10,000 students enrolled in adult education programs, only 114 students were in IET programs. This emphasizes the untapped potential and the need to harness IET's promising benefits for adult learners in Missouri. In conversations with the Adult Education Office at DESE, it is clear recruiting both postsecondary institutions and employers to offer this high-impact intervention is a challenge. Given MDHEWD's postsecondary and employer relationships, MDHEWD is uniquely positioned to lend its support, bridging the gap between postsecondary institutions, employers, and adult education, to facilitate the success of IET programs in the state. As it relates to the state's equity goals, Black and Hispanic learners are currently overrepresented in adult education. Therefore, focusing on IETs serves to further MDHEWD's strategic education and labor participation goals.

MDHEWD should partner with DESE's Adult Education Office, to expand IET programs in Missouri.

Steps to Partner to Expand Integrated Education and Training Programs:

- Establish a statewide IET advisory committee composed of representatives from adult education, postsecondary education, workforce development, employers, and adult learners. This committee should meet regularly to provide guidance on the implementation of the statewide IET strategy, evaluate the effectiveness of IET programs, and recommend improvements.
- Consider implementing a state requirement for adult education providers to offer IET programs. Work towards a policy that ensures rigorous, high-quality IET programs, combining basic skills instruction with occupation-specific training. Allow flexibility for providers to collaborate or partner with organizations to meet the requirement.
- Provide financial incentives to postsecondary institutions and employers to partner with adult education providers to develop and implement IET programs. These incentives could include grants, tuition reimbursement, or tax credits.
- Ensure that IET programs offer comprehensive support services for participants, including navigation assistance. Supportive measures should address barriers to employment and persistence, enhancing the likelihood of program completion. Implement a statewide communication strategy to raise awareness about IET programs, targeting both potential participants and employers.

Tactic 22: Equip MDHEWD's Workforce Development Staff with Professional Development on Postsecondary Education and Training

Priority Level	Short-Term
Collaborators	Institutions of Higher Education, Job Centers

Ensuring the successful integration of Missouri's higher education and workforce development agencies is a key priority at all staff levels following the merger. Achieving full integration will call on workforce development to include traditional higher education in their education and training options and for higher education to be more responsive to labor market dynamics, employer engagement, and workforce training needs. The goal of integration is to harmonize the sometimes differing missions and strategies of these two crucial components to better serve the needs of individuals seeking education and employment opportunities.

The Adult Learner Network (ALN) has actively engaged in discussions and planning to support this integration process. Notably, there is significant support for this initiative, highlighting its importance in creating a more cohesive and integrated approach to education and employment. The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Habley's Framework, which emphasizes conceptual, informational, and relational aspects of advising, provides a strong starting point to assist in training workforce development staff. That said, the current training framework needs expansion to promote alignment across staff, specifically to ensure

proficiency in both academic and career guidance. Nonetheless, this comprehensive approach equips advisors with essential theoretical knowledge, interpersonal skills, and strategies for alignment to effectively cater to the diverse needs of adult learners in the evolving education and workforce landscape.

MDHEWD should enhance the skills of all staff engaged in advising adults by incorporating academic and career guidance training.

Steps to Equip the DHEWD's Workforce Development Staff with Professional Development on Postsecondary Education and Training:

- Create specialized training modules that integrate the informational aspects of advising, aligning them with the unique needs arising from the merging landscape of higher education and the workforce. These modules should focus on fostering alignment across staff and building proficiency in delivering effective academic and career guidance.

- Establish a continuous improvement feedback loop to gather insights from advisors and other staff involved in adult advising. Regularly assess the effectiveness of the training programs, incorporating feedback to refine and enhance the alignment strategies and ensure ongoing relevance to the evolving needs of adult learners.

Tactic 23: Harness MDHEWD's Employer and Postsecondary Relationships to Establish Work-Based Learning Partnerships

Priority Level	Short-Term
Collaborators	Employer Community, Institutions of Higher Education

Work-based learning experiences can be instrumental in bridging the gap between education and employment. These experiences not only equip individuals with practical skills, but also foster a seamless transition into the workforce. Work-based learning is linked to higher satisfaction in education and career. A Strada Education Foundation study compared similar groups of bachelor's degree completers, finding that those with work-based learning experiences had better annual personal income, career satisfaction, and belief in education's role in achieving goals. Notably, recent graduates with work-based learning reported a 39 percentage point increase in believing education was helpful in achieving their goals. This suggests a strong association between work-based learning and positive post-completion outcomes. The merger of MDHEWD presents a unique opportunity to synergize the strengths of both offices, emphasizing the interconnectedness of academic pursuits and workforce demands.

Washington's Career Connect Washington Task Force provides a model for replication. The Task Force was established by then-Governor Jay Inslee to convene the governor's office, the state's workforce board, and key industry leaders, including Microsoft, to improve career readiness in the state. This interdisciplinary group was charged with developing policies to

expand work-based learning. Their recommendations, ranging from middle-school career exploration courses to new apprenticeships in IT and healthcare, were translated into state legislation, positively impacting education and workforce development in Washington. The Career Connect Washington legislation allocated a total of $24 million over two years to fund various initiatives aimed at supporting and expanding work-based learning, along with other opportunities for career-connected learning.

MDHEWD should establish an interdisciplinary task force focused on expanding work-based learning initiatives. This task force should bring together representatives from higher education, workforce development, industry sectors, and legislative bodies to create policies that amplify and scale work-based learning opportunities. MDHEWD can collaborate closely with employers and educational institutions to design and implement programs that align with the evolving needs of the workforce. By fostering this collaboration, Missouri can effectively bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills, providing individuals with a holistic and industry-relevant learning experience.

Steps to Harness DHEWD's Employer and Postsecondary Relationships to Establish Work-Based Learning Partnerships:

- MDHEWD should establish an interdisciplinary task force dedicated to expanding work-based learning initiatives that leverage relationships from both the Higher Education and Workforce Offices.
- MDHEWD should actively collaborate with employers and educational institutions to design and implement programs aligned with the evolving needs of the workforce.
- Learn from successful models like Washington's Career Connect Washington Task Force. This involves adopting a collaborative approach involving the governor's office, the state's workforce board, and key industry leaders.
- Establish a formal evaluation process to assess the effectiveness of employer partnerships and industry-specific programs. This evaluation should focus on outcomes such as student employment rates, job satisfaction, and the alignment of their skills with employer needs.

Conclusion

The strategies and tactics outlined in this report aim to increase postsecondary enrollment, facilitate credential attainment, and enhance workforce competitiveness in Missouri's knowledge-driven economy. By addressing gaps in postsecondary attainment and driving focused action, the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development can guide the state toward policies and practices that significantly benefit all learners. This report offers a timely framework to strengthen the impact of Missouri's educational initiatives, aligning with our long-term state objectives, economic growth, and prosperity goals.

Appendix A: Stakeholder Engagement

We wish to express our gratitude for the invaluable input received from a diverse range of stakeholders.

MDHEWD & MOCAN Staff	Steering Committee	One-on-One Interviews	
Commissioner Bennett Boggs, MDHEWD Samantha Dickey, MDHEWD Laura Winter, MOCAN Paula Clay, MDHEWD Blake Bixler, MDHEWD	Trent Ball, MOCAN Angie Besendorfer Martin, AstrumU Cedric Deadmon, Wadhwani Foundation Laurel Hogue, University of Central Missouri William Mountz, Missouri Southern State University Ashlyn Sherman, MDHEWD Robyn Walter, East Central College	President Brent Bates, State Fair Community College Jamie Birch, Missouri Office of the Governor Joseph Brenner, Crowder College Julie Carter, MDHEWD Mark Cowsert, Missouri AfterSchool Network Brenda Fuhr, University of Central Missouri Gwen Grant, Urban League of Greater Kansas City Rita Gulstad, Central Methodist University Marlana Hairston, The Higher Education Consortium of Metropolitan St. Louis Karen Hayes, Columbia College	Tameka Herrion, The Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis Laurel Hogue, University of Central Missouri Robert Hornberger, Missouri State University Angie Besendorfer Martin, AstrumU Thomas Meyer, Metropolitan Community College Zora Mulligan, Missouri State University President Wesley Payne, Three Rivers College Jaime Ross, Missouri State University President Clif Smart, Missouri State University Leroy Wade, MDHEWD Megan Wadley, DESE Adult Education & Literacy

Adult Learner Network Summit Attendees		
Luke Akers, Veterans United Beth Alpers, MU Health Care Sean Armstrong, University College Jess Bartlett, Jefferson College Kate Bowersox, Columbia College Patty Boxdorfer, St. Charles Community College Kristen Brown, Hoot Design Company Nikki Carter, MU Health Care Scott Chadwick, Maryville University Karin Chang, UMKC Royce Ann Collins, Urban Education Research Center Otto Coon, MDHEWD Lynnette Creed, Missouri Dept. of Corrections Barry Darnell, University of Missouri St. Louis Kristie Davis, DED Keith Edwards, City of Holts Summit Missouri Billy Everett, Missouri Rural Water Association Kat Falke, Northwest Missouri State University Matt Farris, MDHEWD Christopher Fletcher, St. Louis Community College Veronica Gielazauskas, MDHEWD	Amy Jackson, State Fair Community College Michael Jackson, Saint Louis University Jennifer Jewell, Columbia College Julie Johns, Jefferson College Adult Education & Literacy Jay Johnson, Northwest Missouri State University Donald Jones, Missouri Rural Water Association Devin Jungmeyer, MDHEWD Sheila Kaiser, MDHEWD Andi Kenuam, Columbia College Jeremy Kintzel, MDHEWD Leigh Anne Taylor Knight,DeBruce Foundation Jim Kolve, Consultant Caitlyn Kroboth, MACC Kyle Lackey, University of Missouri St. Louis Greg Laposa, St. Louis County - Workforce Development Chris Lang, University of Central Missouri Laura Lester, MDHEWD Ping Liao, MDHEWD Jodie Lloyd, Washington University Tristan Londre, North Central Missouri College Renita Luck, St. Louis Community College	Karim Moukrime, Drury University Michael Murders, State Fair Community College Tanys Nelson, Westminster College Santhosh Kumar Pallepangi, MDHEWD Angelette Prichett, Lincoln University John Regan, Keeley Technologies LaVada Rice, Webster University Sarah Rielley, MU Extension Gregg Roberts, Hillyard Industries, Inc. Amanda Rose, St. Charles Community College Jaime Ross, Missouri State University Subha Basu Roy, Missouri State University Michelle Schuler, Central Methodist University Christy Seawall, Western Governors University Robin Smith, The DeBruce Foundation Andrea Strong, University of Missouri System Merri Sutherland, Drury University - Drury GO Marcia Sullivan, Maryville University Sarah Traub, University of Missouri Roger VanDeZande, William Woods University Shannon Voss, AGC of Missouri

Joe Haack, Jefferson College Marlana Hairston, Higher Education Consortium of Metropolitan St. Louis Melissa Halter, Mineral Area College Shadel Hamilton, Columbia College Annie Herman, Missouri Department of Corrections Shannon Hinson, Moberly Area Community College AEL Program Kristi Holsinger, UMKC George Hudson, KC Scholars Zeshan Hyder, MDHEWD	Jonathan Mack, MU Business and Communities Ext Tracy McGrady, Ozarks Technical Community College Kealin McLean, Columbia College Devin Miles, St. Charles Community College Alexandria Miller,Missouri Scholarship & Loan Foundation Kimberley Miller, State Fair Community College Tina Miller, Mineral Area College Karen Moore, Metropolitan Community College Sarah Moore, MDHEWD Scott Morfeld, MFA, Inc.	Steven Waldman, MD, JD, Kansas City University Nathan Watson, Lindenwood University Alice Whalen, East Central College Adult Education Donald Wieland, Lindenwood University Drew Wilkerson, Metropolitan Community College Dixie Williams, Columbia College Ted Wood, DeLong's Inc Mara Woody,Riipen

Appendix B: Data and Projections

Expanded Summary of Key Performance Indicators				
Improving Postsecondary Access				
Indicator	Denominator	Target	Percent Increase	Additional Credentials by 2028
Equity Population Enrollment	11,000	24,000	118%	70,000
Metric	Baseline	Target	Percent Increase	Additional Credentials Yearly
Black, Hispanic, and Rural Adults	11,000	16,000	45%	1,500
	Notes: This metric uses MDHEWD enrollment data to determine the baseline and MDHEWD completion data for adults and rural students to estimate the yearly credentials added.			
Some College, No Degree	209,000	64,000	-69%	10,000
	Notes: This metric uses National Student Clearinghouse data and national some college, no degree rates for Black and Hispanic populations to determine the baseline and MDHEWD completion data for adults to estimate the yearly credentials added. Due to unreliable data around rural some college, no degree students, this metric is potentially undercounted.			
Potential Completers	59,000	6,000	-90%	3,000
	Notes: This metric uses National Student Clearinghouse data and national some college, no degree rates for Black and Hispanic populations to determine the baseline and MDHEWD completion data for adults to estimate the yearly credentials added. Due to unreliable data around rural some college, no degree students, this metric is potentially undercounted.			
Justice Impacted Learners	700	5,000	614%	4,000
	Notes: This metric uses Missouri Department of Corrections data to establish the baseline for currently incarcerated individuals and California Community College study finding 75% college success rates for prison education programs to estimate the yearly credentials added. However, since a comprehensive reform of state financial aid will also affect formerly incarcerated individuals, the baseline is undercounted.			

Fast Track	650	14,000	2054%	4,000
	Notes: This metric uses department-provided Fast Track data to determine the baseline and MDHEWD completion data for adults to estimate the yearly credentials added.			

Expanded Summary of Key Performance Indicators				
Improving Postsecondary Completion				
Indicator	Denominator	Target	Percent Increase	Additional Credentials by 2028
Community College and University Success	3,000	7,000	133%	20,000
Metric	Denominator	Target	Percent Increase	Additional Credentials Yearly
Fall-to-Fall Retention Rate	72%	80%	11%	500
	Notes: This metric uses MDHEWD undergraduate performance data to determine the baseline and MDHEWD-provided completion data to estimate the yearly credentials added.			
Remediation	2,200	1,500	-31%	700
	Notes: This metric uses MDHEWD remediation data to determine the baseline and MDHEWD completion data to estimate the yearly credentials added.			
24 Credits in 2 Semesters	6,000	9,500	58%	800
	Notes: This metric uses MDHEWD undergraduate performance data to determine the baseline and MDHEWD completion data to estimate the yearly credentials added.			
Wraparound Supports	1,323	500	-38%	200
	Notes: This metric uses MDHEWD equity data and MDHEWD completion data to estimate the yearly credentials added.			

2-to-4-year Transfer	10,000	20,000	100%	4,000
	Notes: This metric uses MDHEWD Transfer Report to determine the baseline and MDHEWD completion data to estimate the yearly credentials added.			

Improving Workforce Alignment				
Indicator	Denominator	Target	Percent Increase	Additional Credentials by 2028
Non-Degree Completion	7,000	20,000	186%	60,000
Metric	Denominator	Target	Percent Increase	Additional Credentials by 2028
Regional Workforce Initiative	5,500	15,000	200%	12,000
	Notes: This metric uses information gathered from interviews with regional workforce providers to determine the baseline and estimate the yearly credentials added. The MDHEWD should follow up with providers for additional data.			
Apprenticeships	10,000	19,000	90%	7,000
	Notes: This metric uses US Department of Labor–Apprenticeship USA data to determine the baseline for all adults currently in a registered apprenticeship and estimate the early credentials added.			
Integrated Education and Technology	114	1,000	900%	600
	Notes: This metric uses Missouri NRS data to determine the baseline and Washington's I-Best completion rates to estimate the yearly credentials added.			

Appendix C: Other Tactics to Consider

Evidence-based approaches for meeting the state's postsecondary attainment goal that were not included in the body of the report are listed below.

Evaluate MDHEWD's Role in Expanding Digital Equity

- To bridge the digital divide and ensure all Missourians have the opportunity to thrive in the digital economy, MDHEWD should partner with the Department of Economic Development (DED) to develop a comprehensive digital equity strategy. This strategy should prioritize expanding access to affordable broadband, promoting digital literacy skills, and aligning workforce development initiatives with digital skills requirements. By collaborating with the DED, the MDHEWD can leverage economic development goals and ensure that digital equity efforts contribute to the state's overall economic growth.

Transportation Analysis with Department of Transportation

- During discussions with university and community college administrators, transportation emerged as a significant obstacle to the success of adult students. Notably, both rural and urban contexts highlighted the transportation issue, with rural stakeholders emphasizing its critical nature. To formulate effective recommendations for the state, further research is imperative, especially in rural areas. Although some innovative transportation solutions exist, particularly within urban settings, a more thorough examination is needed to provide robust guidance and strategies that will benefit adult learners across the state, addressing this fundamental barrier to their success.

  MDHEWD should collaborate with the Department of Transportation to conduct a comprehensive transportation analysis. This initiative should delve into the specific barriers faced by adult students in both rural and urban settings. By doing so, the state can identify and address the critical transportation challenges that hinder their access to education and opportunities, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all.

Launch a Regional Immigrant Services Program

- A "Welcome Back" program, in the context of initiatives designed to support immigrant professionals, typically refers to efforts aimed at assisting individuals who possess credentials and qualifications from their home countries but encounter difficulties in having those credentials recognized and securing suitable employment in their new country of residence. These programs are dedicated to providing essential support, training, and resources to help these individuals re-enter their professions or explore alternative career pathways. In light of this, it's crucial to acknowledge that Missouri is home to over 8,000 immigrants holding foreign credentials who currently face challenges related to the recognition and utilization of their qualifications.

MDHEWD should initiate a regional Welcome Back pilot. This program will be designed to offer comprehensive support, training, and resources to help foreign nationals navigate the intricacies of translating and articulating their foreign-earned credentials in a target region.